

TISSUE BIOPSY AND TREATMENT APPARATUS AND METHOD

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Cross-Related Applications

This application claims the benefit of priority to US Provisional Application Serial No. 60/193,544 filed March 31, 2000, entitled "Tissue Biopsy, Monitoring and Treatment Apparatus and Method", which is fully incorporated by reference herein. This application is also related to a co-pending application attorney docket number 13724-844.

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Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to a method for performing an in vivo tissue biopsy sample using minimally invasive methods. More particularly, the invention relates to method and apparatus for performing in vivo tissue biopsy using optical methods. Still more particularly, the invention relates to a method and apparatus for performing an in vivo tissue biopsy to discriminate between diseased and healthy tissue and facilitate tissue treatment.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Various ablative procedures can be used to treat diseased and/or abnormal tissue. These methods cause physiological and structural changes intended to cause necrosis of the selected target tissue. During ablative procedures of diseased and other abnormal tissue, clinicians encounter numerous difficulties and challenges, these include (i) locating the target tissue, (ii) the need to perform a biopsy and diagnose diseased tissue versus healthy tissue, (iii) correct device placement, (iv) monitoring ablation progress, (v) assuring a (healthy tissue) margin, and (vi) assessing the